

# Ron Paul: Time to End the War on Drugs

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Watch former Congressman Ron Paul present his perspectives on why America needs to end the war on drugs. This presentation is part of FFF's Drug War Video Project, whose aim is to accelerate the end of this immoral and destructive government program.

Go to the podcast [http://fffpodcast.libsyn.com/ron-paul-time-to-end-the-war-on-drugs?tdest\\_id=173642](http://fffpodcast.libsyn.com/ron-paul-time-to-end-the-war-on-drugs?tdest_id=173642).

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you hi I'm Jacob Hornberger president to the future of freedom foundation our mission here at FFF has been since our inception to present an uncompromising case for the libertarian philosophy as part of our series on why it's time to end the war on drugs i'm joined by congressman Ron Paul Ron certainly needs no introduction but I'll give him a short one anyway he's a former multi-term congressman from Texas and former presidential candidate 1988 2008 and 2012 Ron is the founder and chairman of the Ron Paul Institute for peace and prosperity an organization is doing absolutely fantastic work in fact they just had a recent conference that was just absolutely awesome had the good fortune to participate in that conference and all the speeches are online at the Ron Paul Institute's website Ron this war on drugs as you know has been going on for a long time and you have long been one of the big biggest critics of this government program which explain to people why it is that you are so fervently opposed to the war on drugs well mainly because it's a war on liberty we talked about Warren drug and its attention getter and it's very important but to me is the war against liberty the war against people being allowed to take their own risk make their own choices that in a free society people make those decisions and assume that responsibility so yes it is a war on drugs but it's a war on choice and war on responsibility some people even take the war on drugs and narrow it

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even take the war on drugs and narrow it down oh we want to legalize marijuana cuz it's something people like to smoke the stuff you know but it isn't that at all that back i think that distracts from the real issue of saying why are we interested in that even though this is that would be enough for me just the morality of allowing people to make their own choices but the war on drugs specifically has caused a tremendous explosion of antagonism toward individuals Liberty it all there are civil liberties their property rights is the judicial system the racism that goes on contributes that combines with economic problem that just makes this problem so much bigger what amazes me so much in us failing to do our job is that the example that people should be looking at his prohibition of alcohol it didn't work you know the interesting thing about prohibition of alcohol was that back now in the old days they thought they had to change you know the constitution to prohibit people from drinking alcohol but today they wouldn't even consider that you just write a regulation Congress writes a law they violate the Constitution they never look at that on a principle and they certainly don't look at as a libertarian so to me it's a threat on liberty it's been extremely successful for those who want to build an authoritarian government a centralized government and a police state and that they're doing quite well but fortunately due to the work that you have done and many others people are waking up you know I used to say in a campaign freedom is popular I still believe that talking to a lot of young people but we haven't transmitted that into a difference in policy but first the ideas have to change then the policies will follow yeah it's truly we've made a lot of progress you know if you go back to Milton Friedman's essay

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you go back to Milton Friedman's essay that he wrote in Newsweek i think it was in 1972 calling for an end to the war on drugs and then later he wrote that famous open letter to the drugs are Bill Bennett 1990 calling for an end of the war on drugs and everything he predicted it has come to pass of what it's done to American society and your focus on Liberty is really interesting but would you explain to people who say look why should Liberty involve doing things that are harmful that people say drugs are not good for you a lot of young people are on drugs and doesn't it send a message when you legalize drugs that says it's good to take drugs it's okay to take them and why should that be part of freedom they is doing something that's harmful to you well um that argument would say that if we legalize freedom of choice in intellectual matters and religious matters that you're legalizing atheism isn't a horrible you know we should all have beliefs it also means they had if you legalize freedom in intellectual spheres that means you're going to endorse and allow people to read what socialism is all that and cognitive them all about just think at the harm done intellectually and in written religions that go astray it's horrendous it's compared to what people might do to harm themselves you know with the legalization of allowing people to put into the bodies what they want you know it is miniscule but the other principle is just as it would apply to what you read and what you believe in religiously or what you put in your in your bodies it means that you are conceding that governments can protect us against ourselves everything that we do every process every economic transaction every social transaction some people may believe that certain sexual practices lead to disease oh we must protect them and tell them exactly what they can do and if they violate the rules we should have cameras in their house and owned oh

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have cameras in their house and owned oh that's going too far that's not what we're talking about but the principle where it applies to drugs nutritional products raw pill economic transactions of all sorts as long as there's no violence involved and also you know reading matter but some people do like to you know restrict people right now you know the political correctness movement is moving in the wrong direction then it's becoming more authoritarian all the time yeah your point about violence is an important one because don't don't we libertarians draw a distinction that if you go and commit a violent crime when you're on drugs it's a whole different case isn't it absolutely there is a limit they say libertarians have no rules but the rules of the marketplace are very very strict so people can't hurt each other now government is its turn over the government if we have them so little confidence in people taking care of themselves economically b or medically why is it that we pick a few people who love power the whole going light is power over the people and we pick them up as sick of in government and they make decisions for all of us yes freedom has imperfections a lot of people will make mistakes but the mistakes are limited to what they do wrong and they suffer the consequence they should benefit by the right decision but if you accept this idea of authoritarianism that there's a unique group of people out here who are volunteering and demanding that we tell people how to live and what kind of economic transactions there should be all of a sudden things are going to be all right but to plain truth is when they make a mistake it affects all of us and just thinking what the government us whether it's the Congress which is now back stepping they don't assume any responsibility for guiding us in the right direction but they defer to the courts and to the president to just write rules we have we have it so so obscene on what they do the laws are supposed to be written by Congress but

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supposed to be written by Congress but lost today are written by unelected bureaucrats and they answer to nobody you know and they take a small little phrase from the Congress and they do anything they want and the president is so defiant if the Congress you know doesn't do it I'll do it myself so when it comes to this war on drugs they've literally have done that and that it has attitude to pull the militarization of the police but i think the violence in the inner city is very much connected to the drug issue i think there's poverty is a big deal and makes people very poor in the inner cities and all of a sudden there's no jobs due to government policy so what do they do they say well where do you make the money if you make the money in the drug trade so they go and get involved in the drug trade they become violent the police have to get more violent and they have to enforce these laws and of course we're a country that has more prisoners than anybody

else and we have a five percent of the population three percent of the prisoners but most of it's related to drugs and you know somebody quoted me the other day saying I'd release all the non violent prisoners and them up there's a lot it's not just the drug trade but the prison's would be empty but guess who lobbies from this kind of stuff and he's drug law it's the people who run prisons is the people who want to sell them prescription drugs now if you want to talk about protecting people against drugs you ought to teach them that you'd be very careful what your doctor prescribes because they're careless they give you drugs you get addicted and then the drug companies gouge you for it and that is that is really where the violence that should be curtailed by government the government has created that system and of course the way the payments go with Obamacare it actually encourages you know the monopoly control over drugs and the more prescription and the more times we need inoculations and all the things all the fear that's concocted the worse the situation get but in all bio eighths

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situation get but in all bio eighths Liberty they have no confidence no understanding and no desire to live in a free society unlike many of the founding fathers who certainly steered us in the right direction but it wasn't too long after that that we sort of lost our vision about exactly where we go specially the last hundred years you know hundred years ago it was quite a bit different on drugs I tell people when I was in high school grade who I worked in a drugstore i could sell codeine over the counter for cough medicine huh and I never saw an abuse of it we didn't know that it was there so it has nothing to do with the availability matter of fact we were more intrigued by smoking a cigarette because you know it was boring cuz I'm so illegal but nobody nobody went in it started buying codeine to be use over-the-counter yeah it's a sort of the forbidden fruit concept it makes it attractive for young people but okay so so Liberty is at the core of of of your principles when it comes to the ending the war on drugs it's obviously a program that has failed I mean it by its own terms it has failed everybody understands it there's a lot of still drug usage and drug abuse and it seems wrong that they take a social problem whether it's drug addiction or alcoholism addiction or prescription drugs and they they say well we've got this social problem and we now have to have government solve it government never solves it they only make it worse and you mentioned that the market but here with with drug illegality we're really talking about a black market that brings into existence this violent culture of gangs right yes and I we make it out much worse because when it gets in the black market you can make profits and lengthy poor people I was talking about in the inner city that sometimes the only thing that they can see before where they can actually make it make a living but it's artificial you know the fact that marijuana is called a weed if we take a weed this totally worthless and turn it into something

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worthless and turn it into something that they'll fight and kill over and we create the gangs you know we have border problems believe me and there are a lot of half-truths floating around on board but one thing that they have forgotten about now that people are terrified about the jihadists are coming they haven't talked as much about the drug war but there's still a lot of violence on the drug on a borders because of the drug war so the people who want the conditions to continue are the drug dealers and sometime the evangelicals because they want to do what's right their motivations are good but they say we have to have these laws to make people better but it it does you know she gets near this theocracy idea that we can make people better some people think they can make us better you know individually and socially and other people think we can make the economy much fairer and safer while we're doing it we're going to make a lot of money making it fairer and safer for somebody else that only they are to do the things that they should be doing yeah well you also mention the racist aspects of this war on drugs and we we know it falls on everybody of all races colors and creeds the adverse consequences but disproportionately really is african americans in michelle alexander the african-american professor has written this great book called the new Jim Crow which is what she calls the drug war would you talk a little bit about that aspect of the war on seeing this is something the average Republican could never talk about because if you're poor and ends in the inner city and you use crack cocaine you could go to prison for life sometimes if it's a third offense you may go to prison for life even

though you've never committed a violent act but if you're rich and i know some rich people they've been in the media and in hollywood they've been on drugs and they've been in there illegal type of drugs they have the money to fighting cases in the same

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the money to fighting cases in the same way when you look to the death penalty the same way the judicial system is a real mess in the drug war contributes a lot to it so I yes I don't like the IRS to the FBI or the in the Federal Reserve but the judicial system is really messed up it is quite apparent in the media today how some people are treated differently by the judicial system and it it to me reminds me that the Magna Carta was significant because they were trying to make the point that the Kings actually had to live under the same laws as people and they talked about habeas corpus and so much in the last few years especially in the last ten years or so since nine eleven so much of that's been reversed and I keep thinking that freedom is a progressive thing and we always do better I believe we still are but we have setbacks and we're in a period of setbacks but we need to re-energize people to believe and understand why they're better off the world's better off there's more peace than there's more prosperity yet the true believers are few and far between but believe me we're going to have an opportunity because this system is coming apart the drug war I think the neat thing about the drug war has reintroduced the notion of nullification the states are just you know writing laws and change it and the thin is literally thrown the federal government has thrown up their hands so I think you're going to see a lot more of that in a lot of what we do if we have the breakdown of the economic order which is quite possible if the world rejects a dollar then will be a lot of nullification you know somebody was pressed me on TV the other day said yeah but Ron where has there ever been a free market they've never had it never worked I said why you just look at the underground economy when the government so in the end of enter and the interviewers mushy yeah like they did in Italy like they do in LA and

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did in Italy like they do in LA and elsewhere probably in this country to maybe that's why we do a little bit better than that some people think we shouldn't be doing well as you pointed out America live without drug laws for a long time over a century and without income taxation let me wrap this up with one final question you mentioned the Constitution and liberty and privacy and search and seizure would you talk a little bit about the assault on these principles into drug war is broad well that's the ultimate evil of the whole thing because to do good economically or make people behave better by not using drugs they can only do that with authoritarianism by the government telling us in forcing us in prison us if we don't do as they say so it probably a case could be made for saying that is to drug war that has been the most or close to being the most significant event for the undermining of true civil liberties and I think right now in combination out with the radical reaction to the terrorist threat which is one way on proportion as a consequence of our foreign policy but it's also used to undermine our liberties and when people get frightened they seem to want to give up I remember so often after nine eleven people say well road yeah you're right but we got to be safe and this is the fallacy will you lose your remember do you dependent on the government just make make individual safe even safe against themselves and their own behavior and everything is going to be fair so people who have people will not be poor in the government will forcibly redistribute the well in early in our history and our colonies they tried socialism it was a total failure and they decided that property ownership was much better unfortunately by the time of our revolution the writing of the cost they've looked at John Locke and others and decided private property was the way to go today the ideology is prevailing

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to go today the ideology is prevailing because those in charge believe one thing but under underneath right now the kind of thing that you're doing bumper and the kind of things that the Mises Institute and others it is bringing people together and people are scared and frightened you know that that's why this political election this year so chaotic but if they realize actually it's a philosophic fight then that they have to look elsewhere not just between two personalities that don't make any sense if they look forward to philosophies of

authoritarianism and liberty and realize history shows that if you really want peace and prosperity you go the way of individual liberty absolutely and ideas have consequences and that's why now the world is moving toward ending this war on drugs I think it's teetering we just have to keep pushing this is Ron Paul thank you Ron for taking the time to share your perspectives and thank for your thank you for your great work for liberty thanks you

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